



THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE USA

NEWS
WINTER 2004

THE BOOK, a Message from the Regionary



There are very few weeks during which someone is not asking me: “Did you read the book?” In the beginning, I thought that the inquirers meant the Holy Bible, the most excellent Book. But it became quickly apparent that they meant the recently published *The Da Vinci Code*. Very often these people didn’t even wait for my answer before beginning a monologue on the impact that the revelation that Jesus of Nazareth may have been married to Mary Magdalene and would have children. Most of the readers of this book expect profound changes in the position of Christians, and particularly in Catholicism. These expectations are based on the image of Jesus, prevalent in the exoteric tradition in Catholicism, as a poor Jewish carpenter, living from the work of his hands, with little formal education. When, during the 19th century, the probability was stated that Jesus may have been educated and recognized as a rabbi, the idea was accepted with difficulty. Today, the discoveries of Nag Hammadi give a totally different view of Jesus the unmarried carpenter.

We have to realize that the ideas promoted in the “Code” are only the kind of assumptions prevalent in historical fiction. It quite possible that these “revelations” will bring a change in the position and work of women in the Roman church. But when we consider the worship we render to the Lord, little change should be expected.

The large majority of the Catholics venerate Jesus of Nazareth, the God-man. But it would not be a great difficulty to redirect these believers toward the Word, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, as described in the Prolog of John the divine. A return to John’s gospel, which recognizes the divinity of “every creature coming into this world” and Christ as participating in the creation of the universe, should be a relatively easy step to make, even for those who are focused on Luke’s gospel, which insists on the man Jesus and promotes the prominence of Peter and Paul among the Apostles.

The Liberal Catholic doctrine is fundamentally Johanite. Evidence is given by the liturgy that it is based on “the eternal high priest, who forever offers himself as the eternal sacrifice” much more than on the last supper, and also considers the Mother of God as the feminine aspect of divinity, much more than the person of Myriam, the young daughter of Israel, who gave birth to Jesus.

The veneration of Mary, which in the Liberal Catholic Church also includes the Myriam who lived two thousand years ago, recognizes her as the most elevated Apostle, who became the leader of the first Chris-

tians after the death of her son. The latest discoveries have indeed confirmed the prominent role of Mary in the beginning of Christianity.

Another aspect of the veneration to Mary in the Liberal Catholic Church is found in the cycle of the festivals of Our Lady that are, from Her Nativity to Her Assumption, the symbols of the development of the feminine energies in nature, in the universe, and in humanity.

As our services reveal Christ as the eternal Word, they recognize Our Lady as the eternal Sophia, who was, before heaven and earth were made, the divine motherhood, and not only human beings however perfected they may be.

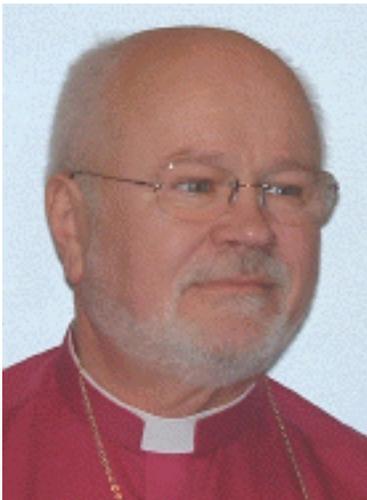
May Sophia and the Word, Her divine Son, reveal the Light of Christmas to us all.

+Maurice.

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THE BISHOP'S COLUMN, a Message from the Regionary Bishop of Sweden

This message from the Rt. Rev. Sten Bertil Jacobson was published in COMMUNIO, the Liberal Catholic Provincial Magazine for Sweden. He has provided an English translation for our benefit



After years of efforts by my predecessors [*Bp. Lennart Söderström*] and myself to promote changes, primarily concerning ordination of women in Minor and Major Orders, in particular the possibility for women to become priests in our church, we were unsuccessful, unfortunately.

Last year we wrote a letter to the GES presided by +Ian Hooker, suggesting that the provinces would become more self-governing in order to – within the limits of the code of canons – make way for each province to adjust to local circumstances. The desire of our members for such freedom was conveyed to the parishes and the National Board of the Liberal Catholic Church in Sweden, but it has not, in any way, been noticed internationally.

Since a new branch of the Liberal Catholic Church was created, by the creation of a new GES, presided by +Tom Degenars, the Swedish province had to evaluate its position. During the past year, information has been shared with the parishes, and with the members, and they have been engaged in an ongoing debate. Since different opinions were raised on how to deal internationally with their concerns, I feared the province might split into two halves. I tried to avoid such a split as long as I could.

When the National Board held its annual general meeting on October 2nd, a vast majority voted in favour of recommending me to resign from the GES presided by +Ian Hooker. After careful consideration and after consulting my family, I decided to follow the recommendation. Thus I have resigned from the GES presided by +Ian Hooker on October 14th. On October 17th, I accepted the invitation to join the GES presided by +Tom Degenars.

Because of this, a division of the Swedish LCC is probably inevitable. I hope it can be done in a friendly atmosphere, so that all Liberal Catholics will one day be able to reunite both here in Sweden and internationally.

So what differences await the National Board and the members in general? Presently none. Besides a growing enthusiasm in the parishes, the future may yet hold unknown promises. What we do know so far is that women can now be ordained.

We all remain Liberal Catholics.

The GES presided by +Tom has its Headquarters in London, United Kingdom, and includes the provinces of the Netherlands, Belgium, parts of the US and Canada, and now also Sweden. We use the same Liturgy, the same Summary of Principles, and the same Code of Canons as we always have done, excepted for a few recent changes done by the GES presided by Bp Ian Hooker, but which are not yet be officially published.

+ Sten-Bertil.

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THE BIRTH OF THE CHRIST
by the Rev. PROF. J. E. van der Stok

The Author was a priest of the Liberal Catholic Church who spent most of his secular and clerical careers in Indonesia, then the Dutch Indies. He became professor of tropical agriculture at the College of Wageningen, the Netherlands. Bp. Wedgwood discovered his exceptional talent as a clairvoyant and recommended him to receive special training in India. He lived at the St. Michael Theosophical Center in Naarden, the Netherlands and worked with the Rt. Rev. Adriaan Vreede at the Liberal Catholic Seminary. The text published today is a transcript of a morning talk given on the 25th of December 1949 and published in the Magazine St. Michael's News.

Since about ten weeks before Christmas we have been preparing for that great festival of the Christian Mysteries.

In November our being has been subjected to a profound purification; everything in nature has been reduced to its fundamental nature by the Divine Father and the Divine Mother, which are the Divine Will and the Divine Wisdom. This Divine Wisdom is the power that creates the conditions for the work of the Spirit, which springs forth from the Will.

As time proceeds, and the period of Advent begins, the Father dwindles as it were, and vanishes; only the Mother in Her depth remains, with Her mighty protection. During Advent everything has been reduced to ultimate pristine purity, to the *prima materia*, the Virgin Rock, where upon everything in our manifestation rests.

The Mother then also recedes, leaving us only the protection of Her purification. In that Virgin Rock, which is like deep volcanic glass, we are reduced to the extreme of our primeval being, and when we try to look in that utterly dark, but at the same time pure and transparent atmosphere, we notice the first primordial structures in the deep, deep ocean of Wisdom. Here we stand before the emergence of the necessary condition for the first sign or signature of the Spirit. This primal structure in the ocean of dark profundity precedes all subsequent mysteries. We have to compare this ocean with a dark night - the Christmas Night - in order to understand the great Power, the Condition, which is created by what is sometimes called "the wisdom of the Night."

Then, during the Christmas night, after midnight, we are able to perceive something of that New Word, of that first sign of the Message that will be given for the new year to come. The more you look at this

signal of the Birth of the New Light, the more complicated it seems to become. From a point of Light, it becomes a sign, a signal, then it becomes a word, written on the dark firmament, and spoken in the silence. Ritual helps you to touch this first word, which springs forth from the opaque darkness of that primeval Virgin Rock. When you are able to touch that word, you can see a great energy flowing down.

What we see can also be compared to a great dark and yet shining lake embracing the whole firmament, from which springs suddenly the wonderful white Christmas rose.

This Word, this Flower, gives a new foundation of Light, a new condition for the coming year. The spirit needs a structure and thus in this New Light, a structure arises, which consists of seven archetypal structures in the Light. They join together to become the real structure for the development in the new year. The Spirit shall not express Itself unless a Form exists.

The Child represents that Form, a child as great as the Mother Who filled all space during the Advent time. She now also appears as a beautiful Form. We will behold this wonder on Christmas Day, but now during the night of Christmas, the scenery is quite different, while we assist at the Birth of the New Light. We can compare it as a small flame, shining in an immense dome. It is the beginning of the spirit in its aspect of Will, a light shining forth in the great vastness of space.

This dome can best be seen on September 8th, at the feast of the Nativity of our Lady, when the first aspect of this mystery is manifested. Then this dome appears as a transparent darkness, filled with the “feminine light” of a deep blue color, as when the moon shines in and through the Temple. It is however not a reflected light, like that of the moon, but a Primordial Light which later will give birth to the Christmas light.

The Light at the Nativity of our Lady is the promise of the Christmas Light which will grow to the full glory of its perfection until the following Festival of the Ascension. But this Light is no longer an individual structure, it has embraced all its different aspects in a single one and then its glory fills the whole Temple. On Assumption Day, even later in the year, the atmosphere in the Temple darkens, it becomes deeper, more profound, the idea of form springs forth from that dark indigo background.

Now, at the time of Christmas, we see the flame of the pristine light only for a moment as a sign, a signal; and as we see its inner structure, Christ is born.

During the Advent everything is reduced to its foundation, to the Virgin Rock, which appears dark, like volcanic glass. When the Sign is seen, at Christmas, it takes form, a form created at a very high level which will descend at the Festival of the Transfiguration of Our Lord and finally becomes, at Candlemass, the pure white touch stone wherewith everything is tested. Every year at Christmas, the Christ Light is born anew from the Light of the Mother; we also are renewed every year and all foundations are made new. This is an absolutely necessity, for we are unable to do anything creative, unless we possess the “*ingénuité vierge*” [virgin ingenuity], that “*naïveté impeccable*” [impeccable genuineness], that “*spontanéité immaculée*” [immaculate spontaneity], mentioned by the great French poet Charles Baudelaire.

After Candlemass, in the course of the year, this Immaculate Stone becomes gradually hidden, but every year in the mystic night of Christmas, the Christmas Light shines again for us, in all its immaculate purity.

THE MOTHER-HEART OF GOD,
by Emma Hunt, General Secretary of the New Zealand Section.

Broadcast from the Liberal Catholic Church of St; Alban, Sydney, on Mothers' Day, May 9th, 1948.

ALL through the Gospel stories the sweet and tender influence of motherhood and womanhood is with us as we read the many poignant incidents in the life of Mary, the Mother of Our Lord. In this Church She has an honoured place: pure and inspiring are the services which celebrate the Festivals of the Annunciation, the Assumption and the Nativity. They are occasions for the outflowing of special influences from the mother-heart of God—influences so greatly needed in the world today.

It is beautiful to see the altar dedicated to Our Lady Mary which is in one of our Liberal Catholic Churches in Holland. There, day by day, after the service of the Holy Sacrament many of the congregation gather in a group at Her altar. All then join in the following Invocation:



The Statue on the Altar of
Our Lady, in Naarden
referred to by the Author

“Most Holy Lady, Mother of the world, Queen of Love and of Compassion, with all our hearts we pour out our love and devotion at Thy feet, and we offer ourselves as channels of Thy wondrous tenderness, as agents of Thy ever-ready help. We pray Thee to use us in Thy Holy work, that we may grow to be like Thee, our glorious Mother.”

This invocation is followed by a few minutes of silent prayer, then all disperse, carrying to their homes something of the sweet and tender influence of Her who is the Mother of the world.

There are various conceptions of Mary, the Mother; different aspects of Her Being are spoken of in our Church though never as dogma.

Again, Mary is representative of the mother-side of creation, the universal mother-nature; in this feminine aspect, She is seen as the hidden life in all forms, the eternal spirit of fertility, God-the-Mother of the universe. Marvelous in its all-embracing tenderness and care is the great Mother-Soul of the world. It is an expression of the indwelling maternity of God in His universal principle of Cosmic Motherhood.

Members of this Church are probably familiar with the conception of God in His dual aspect of Father-Mother. Many are the outer representations of this Feminine Aspect of His Divine Nature. In Egypt we have Isis the Beautiful, with the Divine Child, Horus, in Her arms; in Greece there is Aphrodite the Sea Queen, and Pallas Athena, Goddess of Wisdom, who was the Guardian Angel of the Greek peoples; in Rome we have Venus as Love, Minerva as Wisdom, and Ceres as the Earth-Mother; in India there are the divine Lakshmi, Parvati, Sarasvati, who are the mystic powers of the Holy Trinity of Hinduism; China gives us the exquisite Kwan Yin, Goddess of Mercy, who, for many a long century, has influenced Chinese life, the Maori of New Zealand has Papa Tuanuku, the Earth-Mother, who ever mourns over Her wayward children; in the Christian religion we have Mary the Divine Mother, the Blessed Virgin. It is a universal recognition of God, not only as Father, but as Mother of the world, and in many of the schools of the Mysteries God was worshipped in this aspect of His Divine Nature.

There is also the most beautiful idea, though not imposed as a belief in our Church, that after Her life in

Palestine, Mary, passing away from physical life, entered the great Angelic Hierarchy, and, as Queen of the Angels, filled the whole heavens with the radiance of Her spiritual power. In the Christian Church She is often spoken of as “the Star of the Sea.” As the Mother of the world she is the dispenser of grace and intercedes on behalf of her human children. Thus as a mighty Archangel she leads men and women to God and shares in the work of salvation for which Her Son was born.

She is the consoler of all who are in sorrow; throughout the long centuries many thousands of aching hearts have turned to Her in their suffering and their pain. She has never left unanswered one human soul who called to Her for help: attended by Her vast hosts of subordinate angels she sends Her messengers East and West, North and South, to all mankind, without distinction of race or religion or caste or position. Many are the songs and the prayers and the stories which bear witness to a universal belief that somewhere in the world, to be reached in need, is an embodiment of divine compassion in the form of God as Mother. An example of these is an appealing prayer, translated from the Chinese, in which a woman of that ancient race, where belief in rebirth on earth is widespread, pours out her heart to the Mother of the world in the following beautiful words:

Mother of Pity, hear my prayer,
That in the endless round of birth .
No more may break my heart on earth;
Nor by the windless waters of the blest,
Weary of rest,
That drifting, drifting, I abide not anywhere
Yet if by karma’s law I must
Resume this mantle of the dust,
Grant me, I pray,
One dewdrop from Thy willow-spray,
And in the Golden Lotus keep
My golden heart asleep.

The ideal of Motherhood must be kept living in the hearts of women today or the world is lost indeed. We may picture the call of the World-Mother to all to be Her messengers. She works for the perfection of the Race and seeks ever to exalt the sacredness of marriage and maternity. At each new epoch She focuses the spiritual forces of the maternal nature of God, revealing Herself anew to mankind, giving the impetus which calls all women to the altar of sacrifice for the service of the new race. Through Her inspiration She shows that it is necessary to set a great spiritual ideal before the people, that the strong influence of the Mother-Spirit may redeem the world. She speaks of the sanctity of Motherhood, of its splendid majesty. It is somewhere beautifully written that in “every kingdom of nature the period of Motherhood is sublime,” for “the fiercest of creatures then becomes infinitely tender, the most selfish full of sacrifice, the weakest mighty in self-forgetful protection. Such is the transmuting power of Motherhood that it lifts the lowest nature for the time into the splendour of its Divinity. To those in whom the ineffable mystery of Motherhood dwells is opened a marvelous vision of the glory of the creative power of life, of that which is the supreme and glorious wonder of Divinity. Motherhood is the great Redeemer.”

Every woman, by her nature, is a Mother, and she may be the mother of the child, of the man, of the nation or of the whole human race. She has the power to refine life and to bring great happiness to the world. The poet-philosopher, Goethe, gave us a profoundly beautiful idea when he said: “The Ever-Womanly draws us on high.”

It is indeed a lofty thought expressive of the spiritual principle fundamental to all womanhood. It reveals the power of the eternal woman to draw the world "on high". This influence of the "Ever-Womanly" is needed today to balance and correct the aggressive and material aspect of our civilization. The type of social order which we have built is obstructive to the expression of much that is finest in a woman's nature; our present social order leaves her unsatisfied, for it is cramped by our economic institutions so that what is hidden in her heart cannot often be revealed.

It is often quoted that an Elder Brother of our Race has said: "On the elevation of woman the world's redemption and salvation hinge." The position of woman in any civilization reveals the stage of evolution which that civilization has reached. This truth was very finely expressed by a group of Theosophists who, during the war years, in Europe, met together to study the problems of reconstruction. They wrote an excellent pamphlet, "Woman—Today and Tomorrow," in which they said:

"... if we would have an ordered, balanced and complete civilization the powers of woman must be more fully recognized and used...At different times and in different nations the position of women and the extent of their influence has varied a great deal. In times of aggressive expansion the influence seems to diminish, but the loftiest cultural levels have only been reached when the ideal of womanhood was high and when her influence was truly recognized, as in ancient Greece, ancient India and in the England of Elizabeth. On the other hand, the exclusion of women from the affairs of the nation leads to an impoverishment of the race, as in modern India, and in Mohammedan and Latin countries generally. In the United States of America and, to a lesser extent, in the dominions of the British Empire, women have always held a high position. Their value has been recognized because the memory of their work as pioneers of a new country is still fresh in the minds of their countrymen. They then proved their skill as workers and partners with their men and so their ability is unquestioned. Having won for themselves a place in the world of material effort it was not so hard for them to be recognized as able on other planes of activity, and there were fewer, or at any rate less long-standing, customs to be challenged and overcome.

"But it seems as though this freedom for women has arrived before woman has understood her real responsibilities and opportunities. Instead she too often attempts to dominate man by the expression of all aspects of sex and glamour, and so leads the race to the worship of tawdry vulgarity instead of cultural graciousness, which should be her true contribution. For the sphere of woman is not only the relatively small circle of her home and immediate personal friends. It is the whole world of art, of culture and of inspiration," [and too of man's work.—C. J.]

Woman is the heart of the world. Hers is the mystic power, the fire which quickens. She is part of the sacrifice of God, and no nation can rise to supreme heights unless her function is venerated and fulfilled. Without woman's contribution the religious spirit cannot find full expression. As the Mother of the world, she is the Divine Protector who guards and nourishes the Race. Woman stands for intuition, the power of the soul: Man stands for reason, the power of the mind. In Man is Greatness, Stability, and Strength; in Woman is Reverence, Compassion and Sacrifice. Only by the right balance and adjustment of these individual functions can the nations build a true peace.

If Australia and New Zealand are to play their parts worthily in the great unfolding drama of the Pacific lands, they must stand in their own strength. This tests spiritually in the power of their womanhood; there is a need for our women to rise up and lead the nations to heights of supreme sacrifice and service. It has been very truly said that "not one great woman only, however brilliant and radiant, can make a nation, but the high average of the man in the street and the woman in the home."

It is deeply significant that, following the emancipation of the women of the West, there has been an awakening in comparatively recent years of the women of the eastern races, such as China, India, Persia, Turkey and Russia. In the plan for world evolution the Masculine and Feminine Forces of the universe are alternately manifest. The great age of science and of the mind has been in the main a masculine age; the new age promises to be one of inner perception and intuition, and will be likely to be predominantly feminine in its influence. Through woman, mainly, must come a release of those forces which will give a new spiritual impulse, and affect the whole trend of national idealism.

One of our writers, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, has recently said that “a crying need in all young countries, like those of South and Central America, and the Antilles, is that women should enter into all forms of public life to sway public affairs in a better direction and guide them into healthier moulds. The complete control of all politics by men has resulted in an era of political corruption, with frequent dictatorships. It is for women to rectify politics and purify administration; women have equal potentialities, though of different individualities, it is by their working together that each benefits the other. The more woman is really Woman, the more every man benefits.... If our social structure is rightly organized women will play their true role in civilization. I sum up my thought as to what that role should be by saying that while man is the Deed woman is the Idea. The more, therefore, woman enters into every department on an equality with man, the truer and nobler will be the action of man.”

If we are today to face creatively the vital problem of peace, men and women must together seek a new vision. Material changes alone will not bring about a true reconstruction; important and necessary though these changes may be, yet the problem is primarily spiritual and has its roots deep within the profound recesses of the human soul. The source of peace is in the life rather than in the form, in the spirit rather than in treaties, sanctions and economic laws.

Momentous indeed are the changes which are taking place. Urgent is the need for a universal quickening of the Mother-Soul of the world. Centuries of quiet growth into new and more beautiful forms of living depend upon the outcome of the present hour's conflict. It is everywhere evident that women should assume a fuller share in the affairs of State, and receive a training which will fit them to play their part worthily in all departments of civic and national life. They are called to serve in the larger home which is the nation.

It would be well today to send forth a prayer for a quickening of the Mother-Spirit in the hearts of all women, that reverence, compassion and sacrifice may make possible the flowering of a purer and a happier civilization! In an eastern hymn of praise the indwelling maternal life of God is most beautifully expressed in the following Invocation which is a fitting close to this short sermon:

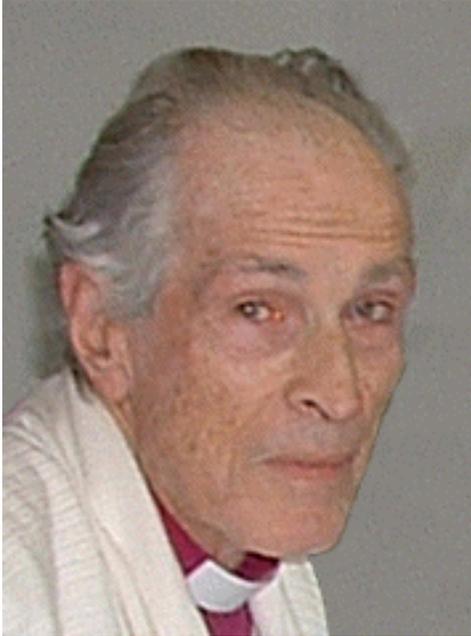
“O Mother Divine, Thou art beyond the reach of our praises; Thou pervadest every part of the Universe; all knowledge proceeds from Thee, O Infinite Source of Wisdom! Thou dwellest in every feminine form, and all women are Thy living representatives upon earth.”

Emma Hunt

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NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH. HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE....

Our Presiding Bishop



The Rt. Rev. Tom Degenaaars was hospitalized on November 10, but returned home after two weeks of treatment. He is still very weak, but is making steady progress. He has resumed his work with the help of several members of his family and of volunteers from the Dutch Province.

The Swedish Province

As indicated in the message from the Regionary Bishop from Sweden, this Province has joined our movement on October 17, 2004. Bp. Sten-Bertil has made all possible efforts to achieve a peaceful transition. Unfortunately the Rt. Rev. Ian Hooker began a lawsuit against the decision by the General Assembly of the members of the Swedish Province, in a futile attempt to take control over the Province's assets. Sweden being a democratic country, there is not the slightest chance that such vote may be overturned.



During the meeting of our General Episcopal Synod, the Rev. Evert Sundien was elected to the Episcopate. He was born on October 21, 1944 in Sveg, Sweden. He worked in Nigeria for the International Red Cross in 1968 and 1969. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bp. Sigfrid Fjellander at St. Michael in Stockholm, Sweden, on March 19, 1967. He completed his education in medicine and is a licenced physician and a specialist in General, Urologikal and Laser surgery. He owns a private clinic in centrum Stockholm, Sweden.

Bp. Evert is a member of the Theosophical Society and of "Le Droit Humain" and other Masonic Obediences. He studied Zen-meditation under Willigis Jaeger in Germany and is a teacher in a privat Zendo in Stockholm. He is the head of the Order of St Uriel. His consecration is planned for May 15, 2005 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands

The Province of the Netherlands



The Rt. Rev. Peter O. Baaij was also elected to the Episcopate in August 2004. His consecration is planned to take place on May 15, 2005, the Monday following the Festival of Pentecost. He was born March 19, 1955 and was ordained to the priesthood on October 2nd, 1983. He served as president of the Clerical Synod and later became Vicar-General to Bp. Frank den Outer.

He is currently the priest-in-charge of two congregations: Amsterdam and the Hague. He is married and works as a Consultant in Human Resources for the town of Almere, and supervises some 1800 civil servants. He will serve as Auxiliary Bishop in the Province of the Netherlands.

The Rt. Rev. Wim van Vledder was consecrated to the Episcopate in Paris, France, on order of Bp. Ian Hooker, to minister to the dozen of members of our Church in the Netherlands who refused to adhere to the decision of the General Assembly of the Dutch Province on June 9, 2003, to elect a new General Episcopal Synod under the presidency of Bp. Degenaaars.

The first issue of the Provincial Magazine of the Dutch Province, since the creation of the new movement, appeared just before Christmas. The name of this publication has been changed from VKVisie (LC Vision) to REFLECTIE (Reflection).

The Province of Canada

The first service in the new chapel in Magog, Québec, Canada was the Midnight Mass. The celebrant was the Rev. Éric Archambault. The building, which is an addition to his home, is still partially under construction and is planned to be fully functional in the spring of 2005.

Diane Temblay, the spouse of the Rev. Archambault, was hospitalized for major surgery on November 19, and is now back home. She is recovering nicely, thanks to the prayers and good thoughts from many members of our Church.

The Rev. Marc Bouchard was ordained to the Priesthood on October 31, 2004 in Alma, Québec, Canada. He is now priest-in-charge of the Congregation St. John the Baptist he founded previously as a Deacon. The congregation meets in the chapel he has built in his home.

The Province of Belgium

A one day national gathering of the members of the Belgian Province was organized on October 24, 2004. Acolyte Sylvie Hermant-Varda delivered a lecture of the Book of Tobias. The music for the Services was played by Mrs. Christine Covelli, who came specially from the Netherlands for the occasion.

Raymond and Marie-Thérèse Bastin became members of our Church on October 24, 2004 and were united in the Sacrament of Holy Marriage, in the Church of Our Lady of Peace, Natoye, on the following November 20.

Our long time member, Thea Pekel has moved to Colombo, Sri Lanka early December to live with her daughter. She came back to Belgium on December 27, immediately after the tsunami hit Sri Lanka. Both are in reasonably good health but face an uncertain future.

In the United States of America



The Rt. Rev. Michael Jean Henri Warnon was the third priest elected to the Episcopate during the meeting of the General Episcopal Synod last August. He was born in Brussels, Belgium on June 13, 1960 as a third generation Liberal Catholic. He worked first on the altar in St. Michael and All Angels in Brussels since the age of five. He emigrated to the United States of America on August 27, 1979.

He became a priest in the Chapel of Our Lady, Mother of the World, Rock Tavern, New York on June 28, 1987, and has served this congregation since. He is currently the National Representative for the International Order of the Round Table for the United States, and involved in several spiritual and fraternal organizations.

He is currently working as a director in the computer department of Orange County, New York. Michael and Andrea de Leon were married in 1992 and they have three children: Sophia, Raphael and Jonathan. The consecration is scheduled for July 17, 2005 in the State of New York. Bp. Michael, who is fluent in English, French and Dutch, will serve as Auxiliary Bishop in Canada and in the Northeast of the United States.

Church of Saint Francis, Minneapolis, MN

At the Church of Saint Francis in Minneapolis, weekly Eucharist services continue, as do the monthly Ray Rosaries. Saint Francis is the oldest, continuing Liberal Catholic congregation in the USA.

On Oct. 16, 2004, Rev. Richard Curney performed the marriage of Aimee Gaffner and Rehman Khan at the Lake Harriet Community Church.

Our most senior member, Monica Molander, celebrated her 90th birthday in early December, and the church feted her at a luncheon in her honor. Monica was confirmed by Bp. Cooper in 1928.

We had the pleasure of having the first sermons by Cleric Jodi Christenson and Server Shawn Thorson.

Reader Judie Cilcain was hospitalized for major surgery on November 19, contributing to postponing Bp. Maurice's next visit until spring 2005. Judie is now back at Saint Francis. She is healing nicely, thanks to four healing services prior to surgery (and many prayers from around the world), for which she is most grateful.

Cleric Lil Brenny recently returned following an absence of several months due to ill health; we welcome her back as well.

The 25th annual Saint Francis Vegetarian Thanksgiving Potluck brought about 30 members and friends of Saint Francis together at noon on Thanksgiving Day. Quarterly vegetarian potlucks will continue for a second year (into 2005).

David S. Cargo and Judie A. C. Cilcain

Mission of the Holy Sophia, Stockholm, WI

We are getting calls and visits from people interested in St. Sophia though I have not begun services or advertised in any way. It seems that postponing events here until spring is fortuitous for you as you will be very busy with all of these new developments.

The work on the church progresses. A furnace is installed and will be test fired and such in a few days by the company from whom I purchased it. Pat's nephew will be staying here for a few weeks to help me with the work and I expect to make significant progress while he is here.

Rev. Wallace Zick.

Church of Our Lady, Mother of the World, Rock Tavern, NY

On Oct. 24, the festival of St. Raphael the Archangel, Sophia and Raphael Warnon have received the Sacrament of Confirmation from their grandfather, Bishop Maurice. They have become the fourth generation of Liberal Catholics in their family.

After some delay, the heating system of our Chapel is finally repaired, fortunately on time, before the first frost. It has been extended to heat the entrance hall and the sacristy.

The Rt. Rev. Michael Warnon has maintained the frequency of the services, every Sunday, during the Fall, when the Bishop was in Europe, although he was alone to celebrate at the altar. His efforts are greatly appreciated.

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The Liberal Catholic Church in cyberspace

The international Liberal Catholic web site remains the most popular source for information for our members and the public. It appeared on the internet on April 5, 1994 as the successor of the "The Third Ring BBS," an electronic bulletin board providing basic information about our Church since 1983 on FidoNet. The first internet page was the Summary of the Doctrine in three languages: English, French, and Dutch.

In nearly 11 years, this modest project has grown into the largest Liberal Catholic resources on the internet with more than 8500 pages in 6 languages that are visited at an average rate of 1200 people a month. Its most popular service is the Digital Library containing, at this point of time, 134 entire books available for on-line reading or download.

As an introduction to our Church, any visitor can browse the 120 slides program THE LARGER VIEW. The other frequently visited areas are the Apostolic Succession Data Base and the Liturgy section offering practical information as patterns for the making of clerical vestments and altar linen.

It became apparent recently that the increase of the number of pages and of the multiple language sections made the access to the files too complicated. In order to assist the visitor of the site, three new addresses have been implemented directing users to the major language sections as of January 1, 2005. The direct access to the English section is now <http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch.org/>

The ALBANUS Liberal Catholic publishing house was created in 1988 to help in the sale of the books published by St. Alban Press, and is managed and operated by volunteers of the Belgian Province. It also utilizes the web site to offer a variety of Liberal Catholic Publications. St. Alban in Ojai particularly was never easily accessible by members of the Church from abroad. Recently this organization has ceased to honor the orders made through the internet, but ALBANUS has quite a number of original publications which still make interesting a visit to its web pages at <http://kingsgarden.org/English/ALBANUS>. This eBookstore accepts Visa and Mastercard.

Every Liberal Catholic Congregation has space reserved, free of charge, on our web site to announce their Services, regardless of their affiliation. One of the goals of this site is to facilitate the unity of the various movements within the Liberal Catholic Church.

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THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Parish of Saint Francis
3201 Pleasant Ave South
Minneapolis MN 55408

Rector: The Rev. Richard W. Curney
1-612-823-4276

Parish of Our Lady, Mother of the World
King's Garden
460 Station Road
Rock Tavern, NY 12575
Rector: The Rev. Michael Warnon
1-845-496-4344

Mission of the Holy Sophia
PO Box 3
Stockholm, WI 54769
Priest-in-charge: The Rev. Wallace Zick
1-715-442-2519

THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH GENERAL INFORMATION

WORLD HEADQUARTERS

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LCC PUBLISHING HOUSE

ALBANUS

“Shanti”

Rue de Spontin, 14

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BELGIUM

<http://kingsgarden.org/English/ALBANUS>

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THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC WEB SITE

<http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch.org/>

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